

Sundry *QUERIES* formerly tendred to the Ministers of *London*, for clearing the Doctrine of the fourth Commandment, and the Lord's *SABBATH-DAY*; but now tendred to the Consideration of all Men.

READER,

This little Piece was printed about the year 1642, with the Advice and Assistance of that Reverend Minister of Christ, Mr. H. Jesse, whose the two last *Queries* be, and many of them were sent and asked to the Ministers in and about the City of London, both Parish-Precursors, and Pastors of the Congregated Churches, for their Conviction or Answer: (which I could not give notice of, otherwise some of the Passages of it would seem strange to thee): but to this day no Answer is come from any of them, nor any Conviction brought in them; that hath prevailed to produce amendment of life. Reader, The great Request I have to thee is this, That in reading of my following lines, thou labour to get a plain honest heart, and then as small matter more I think will make thee and I of one mind about the keeping of the Sabbath-day. So subscribes thy well-wishing friend to love and serve thee.

W. S.

Query 1.

Whether the fourth Commandment, express *Exod. 20.* be not Moral and perpetual, as well as the other nine be, yea or no?

Quer. 2. Whether the scope and drift of that fourth Precept, be not to persuade us to lay by the works of our calling *one day in seven*, that we may on that day wholly give up our selves to wait on the Lord, in the performance of duties of piety and mercy, for our attaining of and growing in sanctification and holiness?

Quer. 3. Whether the fourth Precept, do not as strictly bind us to keep holy the seventh day, of, or from the Creation, as it bindeth us to the observation of a seventh day?

Quer. 4. If the seventh days Sabbath, be not Moral and perpetual, then how comes it to pass that it was instituted, or appointed from the first Creation, when man by guilt stood in no need of a Saviour, nor yet of such a ceremony, *Gen. 2. 3*?

Quer. 5. If the seventh days Sabbath be not Moral, and belonging both to Jews and to Gentiles: Then how comes it to pass that it was given to all men in *Adam*, when there was no difference between Jew and Gentile, and was observed by command from the beginning, as appears by comparing together, *Gen. 2. 3.* and *Exod. 16. 18 to 31*?

Quer. 6. If when our Lord Jesus saith, *Mat. 5. 18. that till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle should in no wise pass from the Law*; If he meant not the Law of the ten Commandments, express in *Exod. 20.* then what Law did he mean?

Quer. 7. If the seventh days Sabbath be not Moral, but an abrogated ceremony now since the death of Christ; then wherefore should our Saviour instruct his beloved Apostles, to pray, *Mat. 24. 20. that they might not fly on the Sabbath*, knowing that their flight would fall out more than thirty years after his death?

Quer. 8. If there be a day instituted or appointed for holy, instead of the Sabbath, without a word or warrant from God: how much doth this come short of will-worship?

Quer. 9. If there be any word from the Lord, or from any of his Apostles, Prophets, or Evangelists for the changing of the day; from which of them is it, or where is it written?

Quer. 10. If there be no text of Scripture that warrants the changing of Gods holy rest, from the seventh day to the first day of the week, wherefore should we follow *Rome* the Mother of Harlots in this unwarrantable practice?

Quer. 11. If there be never so weighty reasons found in the judgments of men, for the changing of the day, whether is that a sufficient ground to change it without a word from God?

Quer. 12. Whether you find any part of all the new Testament, or any Christian Author for one thousand five hundred years after Christ, that in any Book or writing, or relation at any time did call the first day of the week the Sabbath day: if so, shew who, and in what Book or writing it is so?

Quer. 13. Whether you find not that as in all the New Testament, which was all written after Christs death, for the use of all Christians to the Worlds end, so also in all *Latine and Greek Christian Authors*, the seventh day (which now from the heathens custom is named Saturday) is always, in all their writings both Civil and Ecclesiastical, called *Sabbath*; as well as in all the *Parliament-Rolls of England*, and what that Providence speaks forth, that they never made so bold with that day, as they did with all other days, to which they gave heathenish names, may be considered.

Beloved and much honoured, the reasons of my troubling you with this great business at this time, is, the weight and worth of this truth; for the knowledge of the Lord's Sabbath, and the holy observation of it, doth eminently tend to our help and furtherance in Sanctification and holiness; and there be very gracious promises made to them that shall sanctify the Sabbath, *Isa. 56. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.* and *58. 13, 14.* &c. which make me esteem it a truth of great worth.

But Secondly, I find the judgments of men very much at a loss about the Sabbath: Some saying that the Sabbath is now abolished, and so there is none since the coming of Christ; others are we bound to keep any day holy now. Some others there be as learned as any, and the most considerable for numbers that say the old Sabbath is abolished by the Church; and the first day of the week is made holy instead thereof; and that the Church hath authority so to do. A Third sort of men there be which say, the day was changed by Christ, for the honour of the work of Redemption. Now I do freely acknowledge unto you, that with none of these three opinions I am at present satisfied.

For the First of them, I cannot easily believe that that Law which was given at the Creation, *Gen. 2. 2, 3.* and was spoken by the Lord's voice from heaven, out of the midst of the fire, *Exod. 19. 20. Deut. 4. 12, 13.* and *5. 22, 23, 24.* and which alone was writ with his own fingers in Tables of Stone to be kept in the Ark, and that are so carefully distinguished by *Moses*, from the Statutes and Judgments which he taught *Israel*, and hath described them by the name of *Ten Commandments*, *Exod. 31. 18.* and *32. 15, 16.* and *34. 28. Deut. 4. 13, 14.* and *5. 22.* and *9. 10, 11, 15, 17.* and *10. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.* should be any of them abolished: I must have better ground to believe it, than any at present I see, or else I cannot believe it.

The Second opinion seems to me altogether as bad, or worse than the former: that the Church should have any such power in works of this nature seems to me altogether unlikely, the Lord so frequently forbidding her, to add to his word, or diminish from it, *Deut. 4. 2.* and *12. 32. Jer. 1. 7. Prov. 30. 6. Rev. 22. 18, 19.* Again, Christ is said to be in all things head to the Church, *Eph. 1. 22.* and we have one *Lawgiver*, *Jam. 4. 12.* we read of no more. Again, the transgressing of the Commandments of God, to bring in the Traditions of men, was vain worship in Christs time, and so condemned by him, *Mat. 15. 3, 6, 9.* and therefore a sin now sure; and if this change must be admitted of as good, upon this account; I see not how we can avoid falling back to *Babylon* again, and receiving all *Romes* traditions, although never so contrary to the Scriptures.

To the Third Opinion I am as hard to be reconciled as to the former. First, because I find no word in the Scriptures evidencing this, that Christ did change the day. Secondly, or that any of his followers did it by his Authority, nor yet the least mention made of any such reason in the word, as the work of Redemption, or the resurrection of Christ, as a cause of the change thereof, but that the Church in an Apostasy did change it; I doubt not, as she hath done all other the Lord's holy Ordinances: but that there is any the least warrant from the Word of Truth for her so doing, is all the doubt. But further, the Scriptures are flat against it, our Saviour would not have us think he came about

any such business, *Mat. 5. 17, 18, 19.* Therefore I do beseech you all in the fear of God, take this matter into your serious consideration, and shew some good ground from the Scriptures for your neglect of keeping the Lords Holy Sabbath, and your suffering the people to live in this great sin, of making the Lords Holy day, their greatest working day, through the whole Nation; or else repent your selves, and persuade the people to repentance also, as you will answer it at the great Day of account.

But now, because there is some shew of proof brought for this Third and last Opinion, therefore I will examine it before I leave it. And as for what is alledged from *Job. 20. 19.* it can be no proof of their keeping the first day of the week as a Sabbath, although they met together, for in *Luk. 24. 12, 13.* it appeareth evidently they did not believe that Christ was risen from the dead, therefore they could not keep the day by his appointment for the honour thereof.

Secondly, two of the Disciples went a journey of threescore furlongs that same day, which going and coming was not less than fifteen miles, too much for a Sabbath-days journey, when it is to go from the assembly of the Saints. And they kept the day next before it holy, *Luke 23. 56.* and it is not like they kept two Sabbaths together. And as for what is alledged from *verse. 26.* that he appeared to them again after eight days, it needs no more answer but this, That if it were after eight days, as the text saith it was, then it could not be upon the eighth day, and so it can be no proof in that case: and as for what is affirmed by some, that all Christs appearances after he arose were on the first days of the week; I say it wants proof from the Scripture: but if it were so, it would be so far from proving it a Sabbath, that it would prove the contrary: For the third time in *John* of his appearing to them, he found some of them a fishing, and he reproved them not, but set them to work, *look John 21. from the 1. to the 15.* And as for that Text, *Acts. 20. 7.* I say thus, it is to be inquired of them that bring this Text, to prove that the Sabbath is changed, whether the breaking of Bread here, must needs be meant of the Lords Supper, or may it not rather be understood of common eating? seeing breaking of bread is as well used for common eating, as in *Acts. 2. 46.* But it seems more likely for this reason also, because *Paul* was to take his leave of them on the morrow morning. But that which is most clear against this opinion is, the season in which they brake bread, it being after midnight, not an usual hour for this duty of remembering of Christs death, and as may appear, was not done as a Sabbath-days work: for if they met in the day-light before, and kept it a Sabbath, then this after-midnight in which they brake bread, could be no Sabbath, it belonging to the second day of the week; for this is evident by Scripture, that the night of every day goeth before the day, *Gen. 1. 2, 5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31. Lev. 23. 32.* But if they met in the night of the first day of the week that goeth before the day light, and is part of that day; then it is evident that the first day of the week is no Sabbath, because *Paul* set forward on his journey in that very morning, and so this Text falls short of being any proof of the change of the Sabbath likewise.

Also it might be inquired, whether that word *Preached* that is there put in, in *Acts. 20.* be properly translated or no, and whether the same word in all other places, be not always translated *discoursed*, or *reasoned*, and never translated *Preached*, and if generally so translated, then was it not so improperly translated here, as if it should prove the first day of the week to be kept a Sabbath, for want of clearer or better proof?

There is yet a Text more brought, *1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.* to prove a changing of the Sabbath also, but it is commonly alledged with this addition, when you meet together on the first day of the week, just as if it were so written in the Text indeed: whereas there is not one word of the Churches meeting or coming together in the Text, but only of each mans laying aside by him in store something for the poor Saints at Jerusalem, according as God had prospered him; that so at *Paul's* next coming to them, their charity might be ready to be sent away. So that in this Text there is no room for any man to prove that on the first day of the week here was any Church-meeting or Sabbath-days-work appointed to be done, but rather a considering what good bargains had been made the week before, and a looking over Shop-books and casting up Accounts, to see how God had blessed their labours the week before, and what might be spared out of their gains, to make a purse for the poor Saints of Jerusalem; this is the clear import of this Text, for how else shall men lay by them accordingly as God hath prospered them, unless they take account how he hath prospered them? now *Paul* appointing this work to be done upon the first day of the week, it shews plainly that the day is no Sabbath, and it is most likely it was so appointed, to prevent the doing of it at the latter end of the week, lest it should occasion their intrenching upon the Sabbath for the doing of it.

There is also one other Text, that is summoned in commonly to appear for proving the change of the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day of the week. *Rev. 10. I was in the spirit on the Lords day.* Now by what rule of Scripture these men call the first day of the week the Lords day, I know not, no text of Scripture that ever I read of, ever knew it by that name yet, or by any other name but only this, the first day of the week; but indeed the seventh day is known by the name of the Lords Day very well in the Scriptures; the Lord himself gave it this name, *Exod. 20. 10.* and the Prophet *Isaiah* knew it by this name, *Isa. 58. 13.* So that if we will permit the Scriptures to be judge in this case, they will give the name of the Lords day to the seventh day. But if we will needs have the first day of the week to bear away this noble title, it must have it from some old tradition; only now it is not hard for me to believe, that the Church might soon corrupt her self and superstitiously observe the first day of the week for the honour of Christs Resurrection, as tradition gives us an account they did observe the sixth day also for the honour of his death; for in how short a time did the true Church of God miscarry, as far as this comes to, and drew *Aaron* the High Priest into the snare with them for company, in making a day holy to the Lord, *Exod. 31. 1, 6.* So also might the Church soon after the Apostles death, set apart the first day of the week upon a Godly intention, and yet upon some superstitious account, when they had so done, it would not be at all hard to honour it with the name of the Lords day. But further, the Papists themselves confess in their Commentary upon this very Text, That the first day of the week is kept holy by tradition, and not by authority of Scriptures; also from Ecclesiastical history, *Socratus Book. 5. Chap. 21.* it is plain, that all Churches came together to break bread in remembrance of Christs death on the Sabbath day for some hundreds of years after Christ, but the Church of Rome, &c. which (saith the history) used to do it on the first day of the week, will not be hard to find it out.

For the other two Opinions I shall not at present trouble my self further with them, till I see an answer to this.

So leaving my writings to your reading and consideration, I remain,

Your servant, and the servant of all men, for the Truths sake,

W. SALLER.

Blessed is the man that doth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. *Isa. 56. 2.*